[2.]

The Publique Re-
gister for generall
Commerce.

A TRVE TRANSCRIPT AND PVBLICATION OF HIS MAIESTIES LETTERS PATTENT.

FOR AN OFFICE TO BE ERECTED, AND CALLED THE Publicke Regiſter for generall *Commerce.*

Whereunto is annexed an Ouerture and explanation of *the nature and purport of the ſaid Office, for their better* vnderſtanding and direction that ſhall haue occaſion to vſe it, By Sir *Arthur Gorges*, Knight.



Printed at Britaine Burſſe for *Iohn Budge*, and are there to bee ſold at his Shop. 1611.


I R



IAMES *by the grace of God, King of England, Scotland, France, and Ireland, defendor of the Faith, &c.* To *all to whom these Presents shall come, Greeting.* Whereas *all Trade and Commerce whatsoeuer amongst our welbeloued subiects, doth chiefly consist eyther in* Buying and Selling, or Borrowing and Lending: *And for that a great defect is daily found in the*

policie of our State for want of ſome good, truſty and ready meanes of intelligence and intercourſe betweene our ſaid Subiects in that behalfe. By meanes whereof, many men oftentimes vpon occaſion of neceſsity and ſudden accidents, are inforced to put away and ſell landes, leaſes, or other goods and chattels, to great loſſe and diſaduantage for want of good and ready meanes to giue generall notice and publique intelligence of ſuch their intentions, to many that would (if they knew thereof) as willingly buy as the others would gladly ſell. For redreſſe and remedy whereof, our truſty and welbeloued ſeruants Sir Arthur Gorges *and* Sir Walter Cope *Knights, Gentlemen of our priuie Chamber*

Chamber, haue out of their carefull endeauours found out and deuiſed a-moſt ſafe, eaſie and ſpeedy way to the great aduancement, and helpe vnto generall Commerce, and Trade amongſt our welbeloued Subiects; whereby to ſerue the turnes and occaſions aſwell of Borrowers as Lenders, and of Buyers as of Sellers, *by plaine and direct courſe of reciprocall intelligence, and interchangeable correſpondency, for the ready notice and vnderſtanding of one anothers minds. We in our Princely care and prouidence for the generall good of our people (which we much deſire and tender) haue thought it fit, and iuſt that the ſaid* Sir Arthur Gorges *and* Sir Walter Cope *ſhould receiue*

ceiue from vs ſome fauourable approbation and lawfull authoritie, to eſtabliſh, further and aduance this their induſtrious care and faithfull endeauours for the publique good; whereby much eaſe, comfort and benefit would vndoubtedly enſue to our Subiects of this our Realme of England and the Dominions of the ſame, in the knowledge and vſe thereof. Know ye therfore, that we repoſing great truſt and confidence in the prouidence, integrity and fidelity of the ſaid Sir Arthur Gorges and Sir Walter Cope, for their honeſt, iuſt, and reſpectiue dealing herein: of our eſpecial grace, certaine knowledge, and meere motion, haue giuen and granted, and by theſe preſents for Vs, our Heyres and Succeſſors,

ceſſors, doe giue and graunt abſolute, ful and free licenſe, power and authority vnto the ſaid Sir Arthur Gorges *and* Sir Walter Cope, *their Executors, Adminiſtrators and Aſſignes, and to their Deputy and Deputies, during the terme of one and twenty yeares, next and immediatly enſuing the date of theſe Preſents, to erect, ſet vp, keepe and maintaine in any places, Cities or Townes within our Realme of England and the Dominions of the ſame, where the ſaid* Sir Arthur Gorges *and* Sir Walter Cope, *their Executors, adminiſtrators or aſſigns ſhal thinke moſt fit and conuenient, a publique Office, roome or place of reſort or repaire of people for the notice of* Bor-

rowing and Lending *of moneyes, and for the better knowledge of buying, ſelling or exchanging of land;, tenements or hereditaments, leaſes or any other goods or chattels whatſoeuer, which they or their Deputies ſhal thinke fit, and worthy to be entred and regiſtred; and to keepe one or more Kalender or Kalenders, Regiſter or Regiſters, for the regiſtring of all and ſingular ſuch lands, tenements, hereditaments, leaſes, wares, commodities, moneyes, or any other things or chattels, that ſhall by the meere motion or good liking of the owners themſelues, or their Factors for them be brought to ſuch Office and Offices, there to be entred and regiſtred, to be bought, ſold, morgaged, pawned, borrowed or lent:*

lent: which Office in euery Citie, Towne or place where it ſhall be kept, ſhall be called by the name of The Publique Regiſter for generall Commerce. *And alſo that it ſhall and may be lawful, to and for the ſaid* Sir Arthur Gorges *and* Sir Walter Cope, *their Executors, adminiſtrators or aſsignes, and their deputie and deputies, of and in the ſaid Office from time to time, during the ſaid terme of one and twenty yeares, to keepe entries, to make ſearches, and to continue Regiſters in places conuenient, of all ſuch landes, tenements, hereditaments, leaſes, goods, chattels, profits, commodities or merchandizes whatſoeuer, which they the ſaid* Sir Arthur Gorges *and* Sir Walter

Cope, *their Executors, administrators or assignes, or their deputy or deputies, or any of them shall thinke worthy to be entred or registred in the said Office, and that in all things according to the true intent and meaning of these presents, without let, hinderance or interruption of any our louing Subiects whatsoeuer.* Yeelding *and paying therfore during the terme aforesaid, to Vs, our Heires and Successors, from the feast of Saint* Michaell *the Archangell next ensuing the date hereof, the yearely rent of forty pounds of lawfull money of England, payable at the two vsuall feasts, of our Lady, and Saint* Michaell, *by equall portions.* And *we do therefore by these presents for Vs, our Heyres*

and

and Succeſſors, prohibite, forbid, and ſtraightly charge and command all, and euery our Subiects whatſoeuer, that none of them during the ſaid terme of one & twenty years, by theſe preſents granted, doe attempt, vndertake or preſume to imitate, erect or exercīſe any like publique Office or Regiſter of intelligence, or entercourſe for Trade and Commerce, vpon paine of our indignation and high diſpleaſure. Alway prouided, that no man bee compelled to make Entrie or Search in the ſaid Office at all, nor when ſuch Entry or Search ſhall be voluntarily made, ſhall pay any more for ſuch Search or Entrie then ſhall pleaſe himſelfe. And alſo that euery man bee left

to his owne election and free choyce, to vse any Scriuener, Broker, friend, seruant or Factor, or any other for any the causes aforesaid, in as free, liberall, and ample manner as they haue heretofore vsed and accustomed. And that euery man who for secrecy or other causes knowne to himselfe, shall be vnwilling to vse his owne name in the proceedings hereof, may vse the name of his seruant, friend, Factor, or any other at his own will and pleasure. Prouided also, and our will and pleasure is, that the said Sir Arthur Gorges and Sir Walter Cope, or either of them, their, or either of their Executors, administrators, or assignes, shall at or before the feast of Saint Michaell the Archangell,

gell, which ſhall be in the yeare of our Lord God, One thouſand, ſixe hundred and twelue, finde by experience that they ſhall not be able by the gains ariſing by reaſon of this Office, to defray the maine charges, expences and rent incident to the ſaid Office and Officers; in reſpect thereof ſhall bee minded vtterly to relinquiſh and giue vp the ſaid Office, and the exerciſe thereof, and all profite and benefite which thereof may ariſe or grow; and the ſame their or any of their intentions and minds therein, ſhall ſignifie vnto the Lord Treaſurer of England for the time being, vnder their handes and ſeales: That then theſe our Letters Patents, as to them or eyther of them, their or eyther of their Execu-

tors,

tors, administrators or assignes, or any of them which shall so signifie vnto the said Lord Treasurer of England for the time being, his or their mind and intention, vtterly to relinquish and giue vp the said Office and exercise thereof: and all profits and benefits, which thereof can or may arise or grow, shall be vtterly voide, and the said party or parties, so signifying as is aforesaid, their Executors and administrators to be from the time of such signification, discharged of the said yearely rent, before in these presents reserued, which should afterwards incurre and grow due; and the other party and parties claiming interest in the said Office, and other the premises by, and vnder the said Letters

ters Patents, and not ſo ſignifying his or their minde and intention, vnder his or their hand and ſeale vnto the ſaid Lord Treaſurer of England for the time being, as is aforeſaid; and their Executors, adminiſtrators and aſsignes, to ſtand from thenceforth ſole Officer and Officers, and bee ſolely and onely chargeable towards Vs, our Heyres and Succeſſors, for and with the ſaid yearely rent, in and by theſe Preſents reſerued; and for and with all other Conenants, and things, which according to the tenour and true meaning of theſe preſents, ought to bee performed by the ſaid Sir Arthur Gorges and Sir Walter Cope, their Executors, Adminiſtrators or aſsignes,

as is aforesaid. In witnesse *whereof we haue caused these our Letters to be made Patent. Witnesse our selfe at Westminster the fift day of March; In the eighth yeare of our reigne of England, France, and Freland: and of Scotland the foure and fortieth.*

CARTVVRIGHT.

Per me de priuato Sigillo.

Examinatur per me Thomam Marten.

An

TO THE VNPAR-
tiall Reader.

IN matters of this nature, where a loyal deſire hath endeauoured to performe an acceptable ſeruice to the Common-wealth; albeit the ſucceſſe ſort not in euery point, anſwerable to hope and expectation: yet this may ſtand for a maine comfort, that the in-

tention is free from all publique offence, or priuate wronge, and therefore respects not the taxe or scandall of those malignant humours, which are accustomed to cast corrupt aspertions on honest designes. But because this proiect hath meerly and solely proceeded from mine own poore conceit and labour, (ayming specially at the aduancement of mutuall Commerce, the bond and sinewes of humane society) I haue thought good for the auoyding of all doubtfull construction or mistaking (which might blemish it in the birth) to deliuer it into the world, with a perspicuous Ouerture and direction concerning the pur-

port and vſes therof; becauſe they
are but briefly touched, and in
generall terms ſet downe
in the Patent.

Arthur Gorges.

ANOVERTVRE AND EXPLANATION of the purport and vse of this OFFICE.

First, it is to be vnderstood that this Office to be knowne and called by the name of The publique Register for generall Commerce, *is indeed but the very resemblance of a publique*

publique Market, whereunto all men may freely repaire, and resort to Trade and Traffique, without constraint or restraint, at their owne wils and pleasures. And as in Markets many Commodities are solde and met withall more easily, and better cheape in one selfe place, then by seeking vp and downe the Countrey for them with more trouble, and at dearer rates in seuerall places: so is it by the vse and benefite of this Office, which as a publique Market, is solely in his Maiesties power to authorise and priuiledge.

Secondly this publique Market is a place which all men may easily finde out and freely repaire vnto, for speedy meanes of helpe vpon any extremity of

of forfeitures of bondes or counter-bonds, or danger of morgages of landes or goods by breach of dayes, when they know not suddenly where to prouide themselues of moneyes vpon good security; for that euery man (especially those that dwell in remote shieres) is not acquainted with a Broker, nor knowes assuredly where to finde one to serue his turne vpon such vrgent occasion, or if he doe, it will be at a deare rate: which defect this Register shall be able to supply with very conscionable and moderate consideration; taking nothing of any, but what the parties themselues shall in reason thinke fit and competent for the seruing of their turnes, by the trauell of the Officers.

Thirdly, by instance to make it more plaine, such men as haue monies lying by them, that they would expose after eight, nine, or ten in the hundred may, if they please, make it knowne & haue it registred in this Office, wherby such as repaire vnto this Register to borrow, may also receiue notice & direction accordingly for such summes as they desire by assignment from the Officers, if the security be good and liked of.

Fourthly, by way of example also to expresse the vse and benefite of this Office for Buying and Selling: *Suppose that one hath lands or a house in Wilt-shiere that he would gladly sell, suddenly to raise monies, without too great*

great losse, but knows not how to make it generally knowne to the world; and that there are some others as desirous to buy lands or a house in that shire at a reasonable rate, and cannot learne nor get knowledge of any such; yet by recourse to this Register they may easily informe themselues, and haue mutuall intelligence of one anothers mindes perfectly, and readily, albeit they dwell farre asunder; wheras now many times both parties are in care and cannot serue their turnes accordingly, vndergoing thereby much inconuenience, which this Office with great ease doth remedie.

Fiftly, the parties themselues that do either lend or borrow, buy or sell, may

vse it with as great ſecurity & ſecrecy as they ſhall thinke fit by vſing other mens names then their owne, other places then their owne houſes, and other friends or Factors for themſelues if they be ſo diſpoſed. So as by this free, plaine and eaſie courſe all men may reſt ſatisfied, that there is no cunning intent by meanes of this Office, to defraude men, nor by the practice thereof to diſcouer mens wealths or ſecret eſtates, further then to themſelues ſhall ſeeme good.

Sixthly, it is neyther deſired nor meant that any ſhould leaue their moneyes or goods that they would lend or ſell, in the charge or cuſtody of this Office, but in ſuch places as the owners

ners themſelues ſhall thinke moſt ſafe and conuenient; wherby ſuch as would borrow or buy, may (if they pleaſe) by this Regiſter be directed to thoſe places or perſons that would Lend or Sell to ſerue their turns mutually. And by this courſe all men may reſt ſecure of the integritie and faire dealings that ſhall bee vſed concerning other mens monies and goods; which the Patentees ſeek not to haue the cuſtody or expoſing of for their priuate profit, but will rather auoide the accidents and dangers of ſuch hazards, and loſſes, as might happen in ſo great a charge, by miſ-reckoning, robbing, or many other waies, which we ſee ſo often happens vnto men in their owne priuate houſes. And ſuch a misfor-

tune

tune might be both a disparagement to our credits by wrong constructions, and also a taxe and preiudice to the proceeding and reputation of this Office (which consisting meerely of the good opinion of the world for the iust dealing to be vsed therein) if it be found contrarie or corrupt, it cannot subsist, but will die in it selfe as vnprofitable.

Moreouer wheras many men dwelling far from London, are now inforced to repaire thither, to their great trauaile & charge to serue their turn; many waies in these forenamed kinds, by the benefite and vse of this Office they shall be much eased. For it is intended (by the fauour of God) that in seue-

ſeuerall places of this Realme this publique Regiſter ſhalbe kept in ſome ſuch chiefe Cities or Townes as ſhall bee found moſt conuenient to ſerue the Countries next about them in theſe affaires, and to holde correſpondency with the Citie of London.

Againe, it is very certaine that diuers landes, leaſes, houſes, woods and chattels, which haue beene ſolde priuately at very low rates, to the no little loſſe of the owners, would haue bin purchaſed at more indifferent prices, if they had bin more publiquely knowen: for it often falleth out, that thoſe who would gladly buy ſuch, do ſeldome or neuer get knowledge of the Sellers intent, till the things deſired be paſt

ree-

recouery, & the preiudice of both parties: which defect this publique Register will be a great meanes to supplie.

Furthermore, there are a world of extraordinarie things, which are but few mens monies, and the owners themselues would gladly vent if they knew how, but lie concealed or in effect lost in the sale, because that diuers others, which would as willingly buy such at valuable prices, know not how or where to recouer them. But herein it is to be vnderstood that no commodities of base qualitie or inferiour values shall be entred into this Register, but such as the Officers shall thinke fit to be dealt in, without disparagement of the place.

Be-

Beſides, it often falleth out that men vpon extremity are driuen to pawne things of good value for ſmal ſummes, to ſeruc their turnes with monies, vntill they can ſell them outright; wherin they vſe the means of Scriueners or Brokers, in whoſe hands they leaue the ſaid pawnes, ſetting very reaſonable prices on them; allowing alſo a reward: and yet notwithſtanding it is often ſeene and ſpoken of, that many Scriueners or Brokers, to whom ſuch things haue beene committed in truſt, would neuer vent them at the owners prices, except they might make a greater ſurpluſage to themſelues then the rate limited. And by that meanes many haue beene kept in want of ſuch reliefe, as their owne goods would af-

foord them; whereby at last their pawnes haue eaten themselues out in vsury, or at least haue beene solde to great losse, the owners wanting means to redeeme them: to which grieuance this publique Register may yeelde a comfortable remedy.

Moreouer, whereas many conscionable men would willingly expose their monies for eight or nine in the hundred, but cannot make it knowne, and therefore doe put their stockes into the hands of Brokers or Scriueners to imploy for them: so it is, that those Brokers doe for the most part take ten in the hundred for those monies which the owners doe affoord at a cheaper hand; thereby wronging both the

lender and borrower: which inconuenience this publique Register would easily remedy, by giuing all men safe and ready meanes to expose their own monies; besides the assurance neuer to be deceiued in their trust, which now many times happens when Brokers or Scriueners do chance to fall banckrout.

Furthermore, whereas there is daily occasion of returning and paying of monies from one part of the Kingdome to another, by meanes of Trade and Commerce: and therein is found a great defect for want of some safe and speedy meanes of direction, for interchangeable correspondency in that behalfe (because that

men are now inforced eyther to conuey those monies that they are to pay or receiue, by Carriers, Clothiers, or seruants, who are many times robbed; or else men are driuen to be at extraordinary cost, for the returnes of monies, by letters of exchange) by the vse of this publique Register men may (if they please) greatly ease and remedy both these inconueniences. And to expresse the manner of doing it by example (which is the plainest way of instruction,) Suppose that if any Gentleman, Merchant or Tradesman of the North, vpon occasion of busines, being come to London, giues notice there vnto this Register, that he can make present payment of monies in Yorke at a certaine day, to serue the

turnes

turnes of any Londoners, or others in that place, if they will deliuer the like ſummes in London; and ſo accordingly may any Londoners or others ſearch the Regiſter to that or the like intent, whereby to giue himſelfe knowledge of any interchangeable correſpondency, for payments or receits at Yorke. And in this ſort may men mutually vnderſtand one anothers mindes for Trade and Commerce, and with no leſſe facility and ſecurity ſerue their turnes one of another in matters of this kinde, throughout all thoſe Cities of this Kingdome, where this publique Regiſter ſhall be erected and kept, which will be free for all men to repaire vnto, at their pleaſures. But herein it is to be vn-

derſtood, that this publique Regiſter ſhall not be made ſo vulgar, as to bee kept in euery chiefe Citie or Shiere-towne within the Realme, but in thoſe neceſſary and commodious places that ſhall be found moſt fit for the publicke good, and to performe thoſe beneficiall Offices that are promiſed and may be expected by the vſe of this publique Regiſter for the aduancement of generall Commerce.

Againe, to giue thoſe men that would borrow full ſatisfaction, how they ſhall be aſſured when they come to this Regiſter for direction in that behalfe, and haue giuen the Officer ſuch gratuity, as in reaſon and out of his owne free will he hath thought fit,

fit, in regard of the note or direction deliuered to ſerue his turne, for the ſummes that vpon good ſecurity he would take vp, and not be diſappointed nor loſe his reward giuen: If it ſo fall out (for ſuch accidents may happen) that either the party that ſhould lend this money be from home, or elſe how otherwiſe ſo diſpoſed of his ſtocke, (ſince the intelligence giuen to this Regiſter) that he cannot inſtantly ſerue the turne of him that would borrow; let that party againe returne to the Office, and he ſhal either preſently haue another note, whereby to ſerue his turne, or elſe he ſhall receiue the reward that he hath giuen the Officer in that behalfe: Whereby may plainly appeare, that there ſhall be no

ſhifts

ſhifts vſed eyther to fruſtrate men of their deſired purpoſe and hope in this Office, or trickes to draw rewards for that, which by the vſe of the Office, or trauell of the Officer is not merited. And in this point I haue thought fit to giue good caution; both for that ſuch chances may ſometimes fall out: and beſides it is not vnlikely, but that this obiection may be made. And therefore very pertinent to the purpoſe, and to auoyde doubts, plainely to ſet downe an anſwer, and certaine reſolution, what men may depend vpon, and how they ſhall be dealt withall in ſuch caſes, thereby to auoyde all ſcruple. And as in matters of borrowing, ſo vpon occaſions of buying, the like courſe and reſtitution ſhall be vſed.

But

But because amongst all these Ouertures and relations, there hath not beene any mention made, either when or where this publique Regiſter ſhall be erected and kept; the which it may be preſumed men will expect ſhould haue beene in this diſcourſe related, touching that point, it is very requiſite this much to ſay: that the Office is of ſuch a nature, as that it will requre many things neceſſary for the complete ordering and fitting thereof, as alſo no leſſe care and circumſpection in the choice of ſuch Officers and Clerkes, as ſhall be anſwerable and ſutable to that integritie and iuſt dealing that is promiſed by the Patent, in the behalfe of the Patentees. Beſides, to finde out and faſhion a

conuenient place fit for this Office could not be done ſuddenly, nor in haſt, conſidering that our Patent was not paſt the Seale little more then a moneth ſince; and before that time the Patentees not aſſured whether it ſhould paſſe, or not: and therefore no reaſon for them to make preparation for that which lay not in their owne powers to diſpoſe of. Notwithſtanding if it ſo fall out, that the proiect (in manner as it is expreſſed) proue acceptable to the world, in regard of the publique good, which is the true ſcope and end thereof, this may ſuffice, that all expedition ſhalbe vſed for the erecting thereof, and ſufficient notice giuen by ſome publique manner of intelligence in what place it ſhal be kept.

Laſtly,

Laſtly, whereas his excellent Maieſtie according to the cuſtome of former times, and of all well policed States, hath in his Princely diſpoſition pleaſed to giue grace and preferment to diuers honeſt Proiects and profitable inuentions, which haue truly tended to the publique good, without wronging the particular right of any; and in that regard hath alſo vouchſafed to grant his Letters Patent for the ſole priuiledge and practiſe of this new inuented Regiſter to the Patentees, if any vndutifull or malignant ſpirit for a ſelfe priuate gaine, will expoſtulate the iuſtneſſe of this proceeding, it is thus truely and briefly anſwered, That it is in all equity as honourable for his Maieſty,

to

to prouide as good meanes for the eaſe and benefite of his people in generall (without any abridgement of former liberty) as it is lawfull or iuſt for any priuate Scriuener, Broker, or other, to prouide a courſe to aduance his owne particular eſtate and profite, which is often done to the detriment of many. And now that the nature, vſe and ſcope of this publique Regiſter is plainly and truly manifeſted, I leaue all men to their owne ſenſe and liking, and the ſucceſſe herof to the eternall guider of all things.

FINIS.